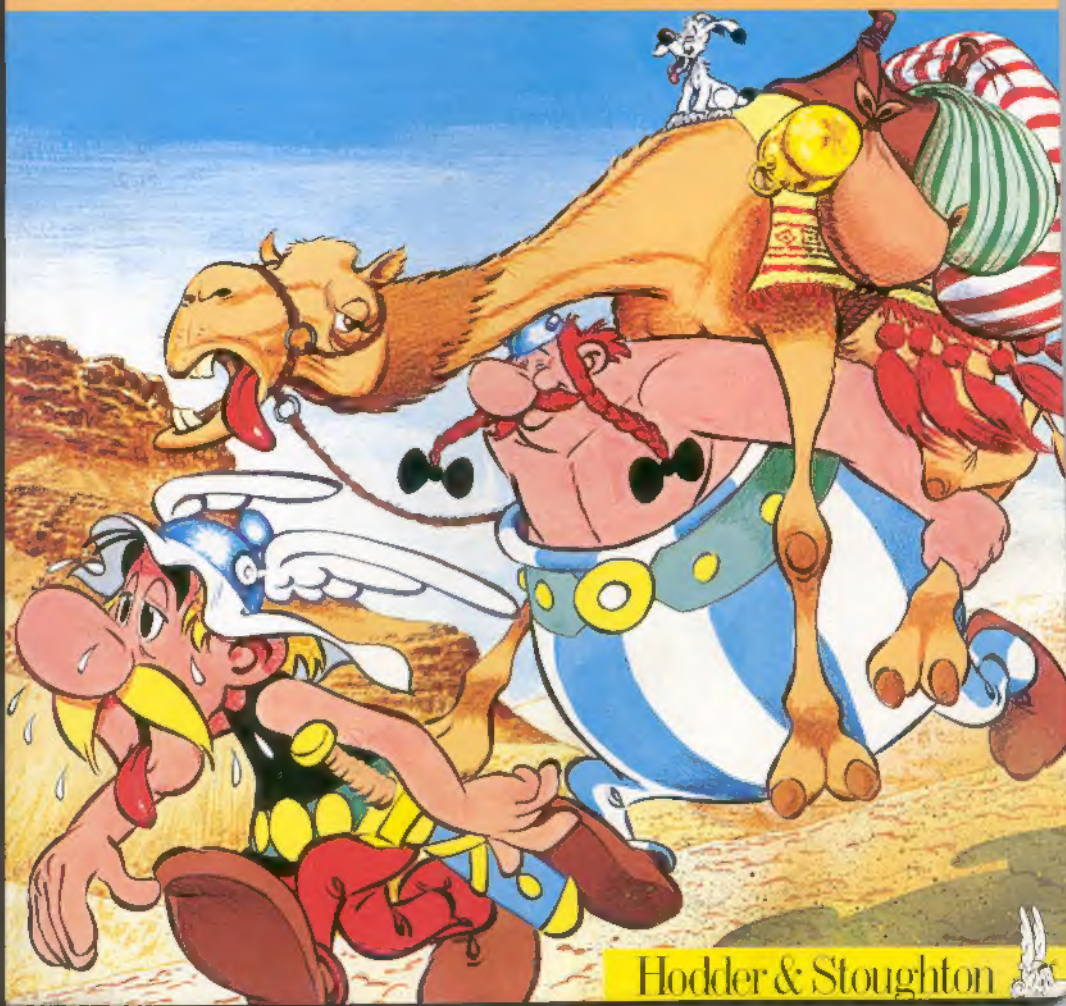


R. GOSCINNY - A. UDERZO

# Asterix AND THE BLACK GOLD

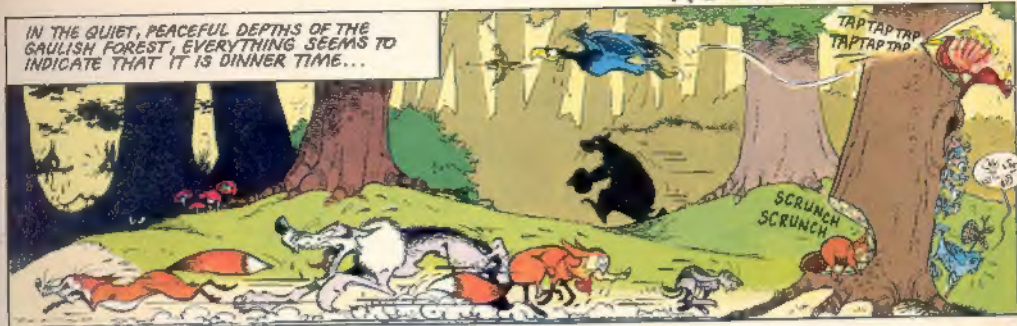
WRITTEN AND ILLUSTRATED BY UDERZO



Hodder & Stoughton



IN THE QUIET, PEACEFUL DEPTHS OF THE GAULISH FOREST, EVERYTHING SEEMS TO INDICATE THAT IT IS DINNER TIME...



... BUT SOME OF THE FOREST DWELLERS HAVE LOST THEIR APPETITES.

OINK! GRUNT!  
OINK! OINK!

GRUNT! OINK!  
OINK OINK!

MUNCH!  
MUNCH!

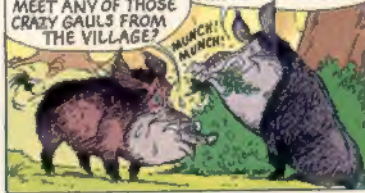


(AUTHOR'S NOTE: WITH APOLOGIES TO PURISTS, WE PROVIDE A DUBBED VERSION TO FACILITATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIALOGUE)

ARE YOU QUITE SURE WE AREN'T GOING TO MEET ANY OF THOSE CRAZY GAULS FROM THE VILLAGE?

I TOLD YOU, YOU'RE QUITE SAFE WITH ME. WHY ARE YOU SCARED?

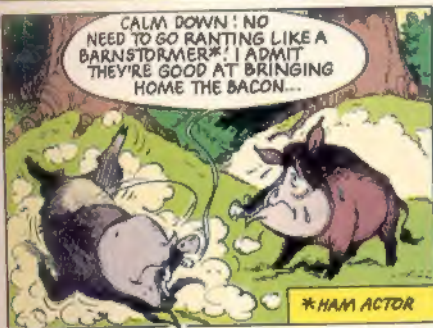
MUNCH!  
MUNCH!



BECAUSE THEY'VE WOLFED DOWN, SCRUNCHED, CRUNCHED AND BOBBLED UP MY WHOLE HERD, AND I AM THE SOLE SURVIVOR OF A LARGE FAMILY, THAT'S WHY!!!



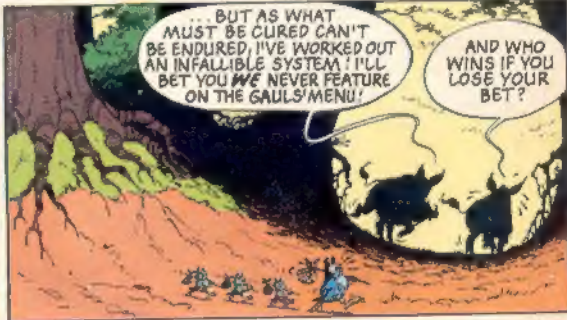
CALM DOWN! NO NEED TO GO RANTING LIKE A BARNSTORMER\*! I ADMIT THEY'RE GOOD AT BRINGING HOME THE BACON...



\*HAM ACTOR

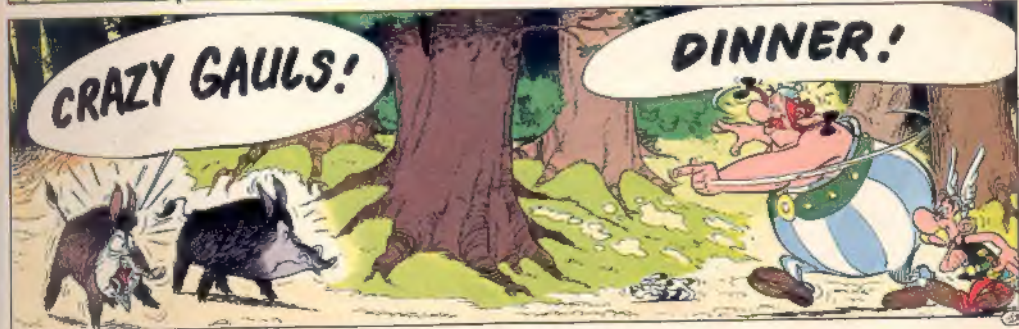
... BUT AS WHAT MUST BE CURED CAN'T BE ENDURED, I'VE WORKED OUT AN INFALLIBLE SYSTEM! I'LL BET YOU ~~W~~ NEVER FEATURE ON THE GAULS' MENU!

AND WHO WINS IF YOU LOSE YOUR BET?

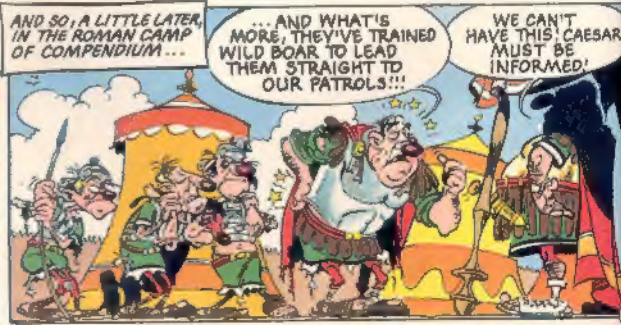
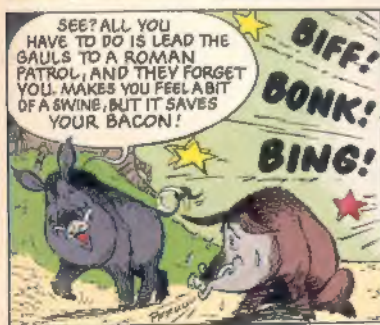
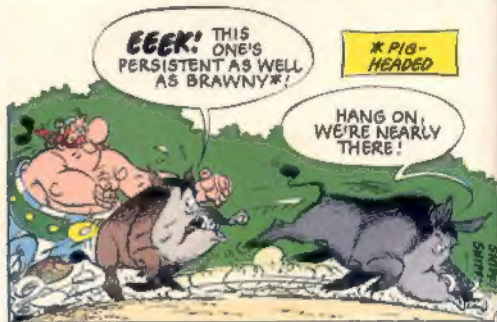
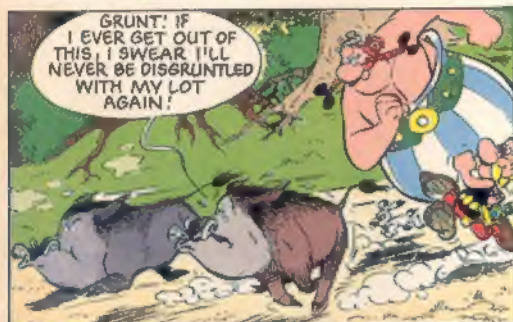


CRAZY GAULS!

DINNER!









IN ROME...

NO, WE MOST CERTAINLY CAN'T HAVE THIS!!!

THAT ARMORICAN VILLAGE IS STILL HOLDING THE MIGHT OF ROME UP TO RIDICULE!

AND I HEAR THAT MY LEGIONS NOW HAVE TO FACE HORDES OF WILD BEASTS!

THE MORALE OF MY TROOPS IS AT ROCK BOTTOM, AND I AM THE LAUGHING STOCK OF MY ENEMIES IN THE SENATE!

AS WE ALL KNOW, WE HAVE FAILED TO CONQUER THOSE INDOMITABLE GAULS BY FORCE, CORRUPTION, OR EVEN KIDNAPPING, AND YET...

M. DEVIUS SURREPTITIUS, YOU'RE CHIEF OF MY SECRET SERVICE, M. I. XI. IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA, BY JUPITER, LET'S HEAR IT!

O CAESAR, THE SECRETS OF THE DRUIDS ARE PASSED ON ONLY FROM DRUID TO DRUID BY WORD OF MOUTH!

WHAT ABOUT IT?

SIMPLE! NO ONE BUT A DRUID WHO IS ALSO SPYING FOR US CAN OBTAIN AND PASS ON THE RECIPE OF THAT MAGIC POTION WHICH MAKES THE GAULS INVINCIBLE!

AND AMONG MY AGENTS I HAVE JUST SUCH A DRUID!

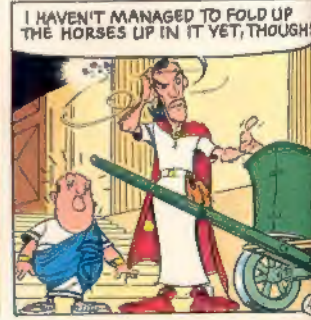
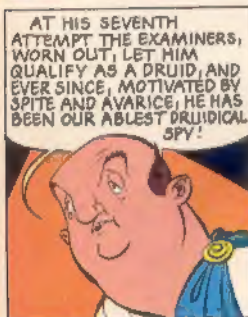
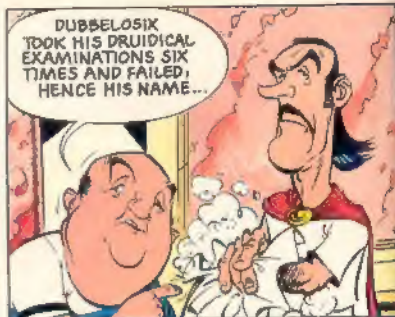
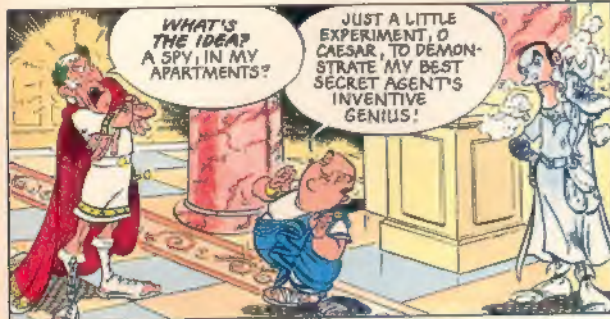
THEN WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? FETCH HIM!

HE'S ALREADY HERE, CAESAR, QUITE CLOSE TO YOU!

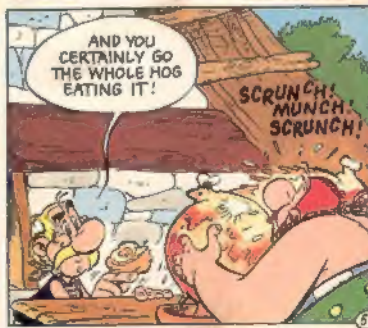
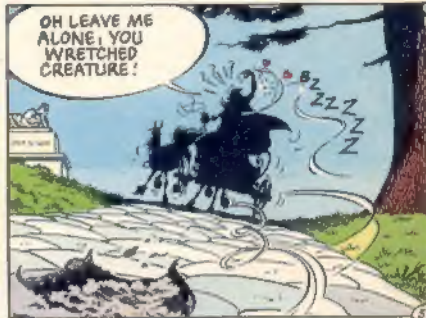
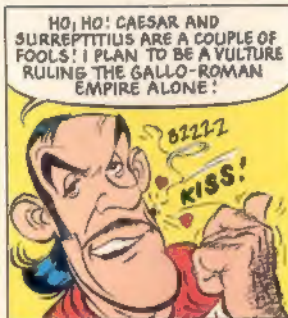
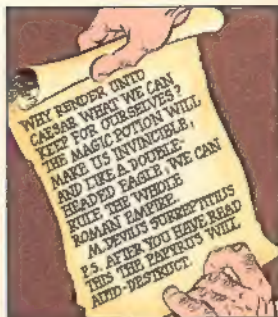
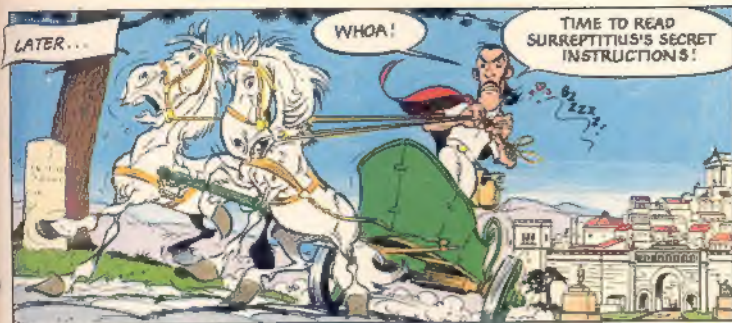
?!?

YOU CAN COME DOWN FROM YOUR PEDESTAL NOW, DUBBELD-SIX!

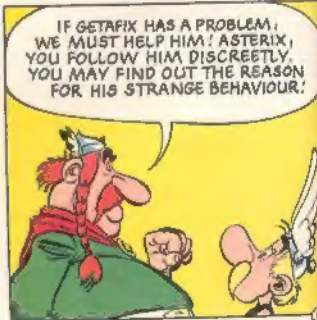
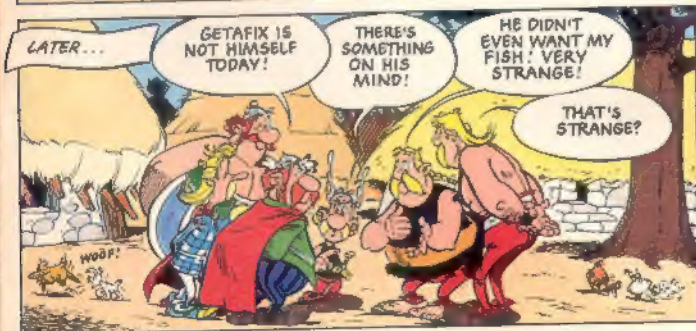




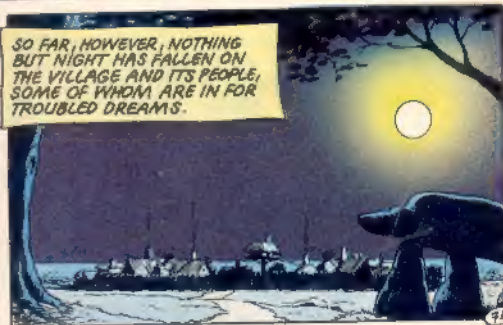
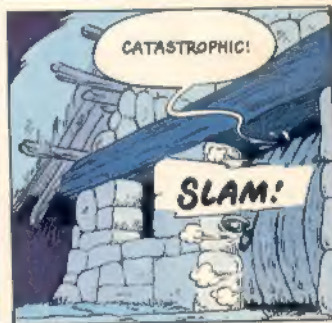














BUT NEXT  
MORNINGS...

COME QUICKLY!  
EKONOMIKRISIS THE  
PHOENICIAN MERCHANT  
HAS LANDED ON  
THE BEACH!!

HE'S  
HERE! AT  
LAST!!

HULLO,  
ASTERIX,  
NICE DAY,  
ISN'T IT?

?!

I WOULDN'T MIND  
TASTING YOUR NEW BARREL  
OF BEER, VITALSTATISTIX!  
DON'T FORGET!

?!

MMM! YOUR  
FISH HAS A REALLY  
INTERESTING AROMA,  
UNHYGIENIX!

?!

SO GETAFIX  
WAS WAITING FOR  
EKONOMIKRISIS  
AND HIS CARGO!

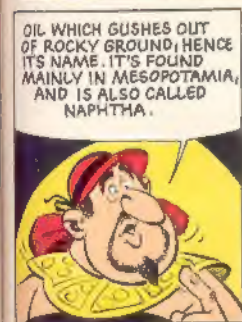
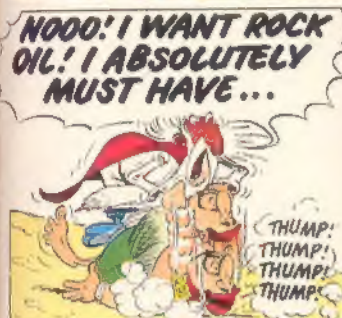
AND HE  
APPRECIATED  
MY FISH, SO  
THERE!

THAT'S  
WHAT WORRIES  
ME. ANYONE IN THAT  
STATE MUST BE ON  
THE BRINK OF  
SUICIDE!

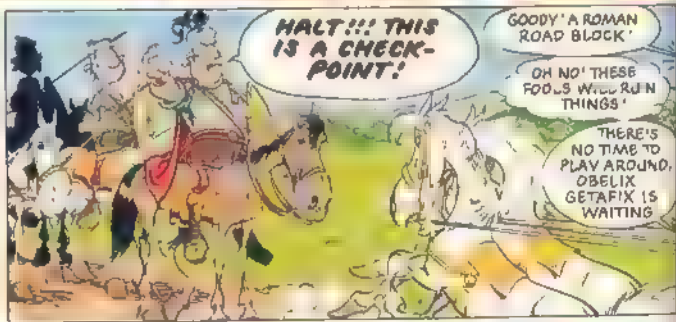
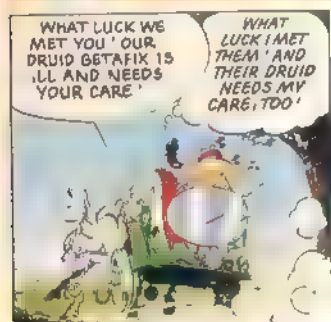
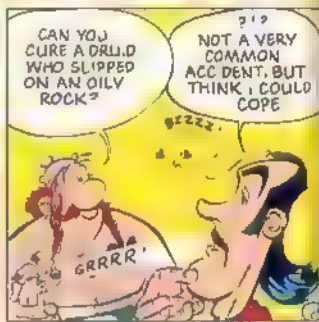
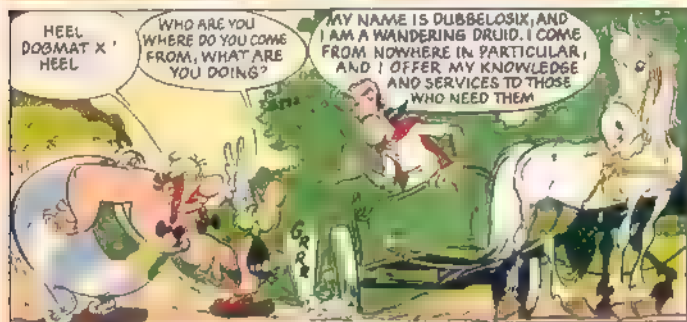
HERE YOU ARE AT LAST,  
EKONOMIKRISIS, OLD CHAP!

HULLO THERE, GETAFIX! I'VE  
BEEN LOOKING FORWARD TO  
SEEING YOU ALL AGAIN EVER SINCE  
MY LAST VOYAGE! LOOK WHAT  
I'VE BROUGHT FROM TYRE,  
SPECIALLY FOR YOU!

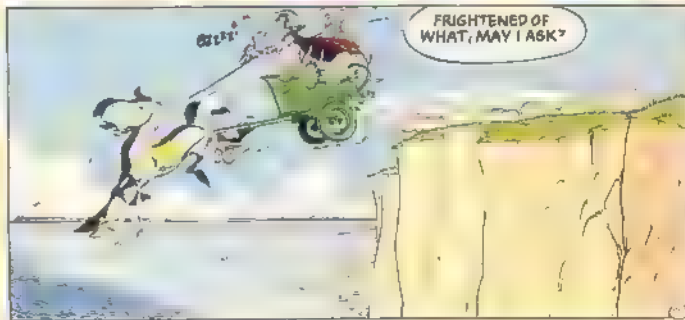
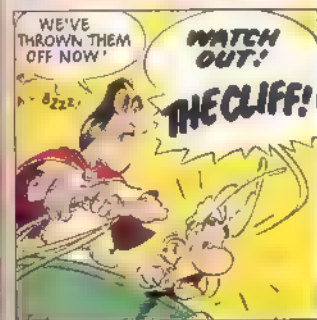
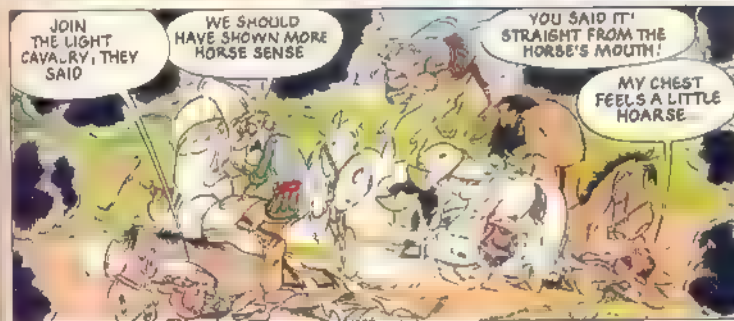
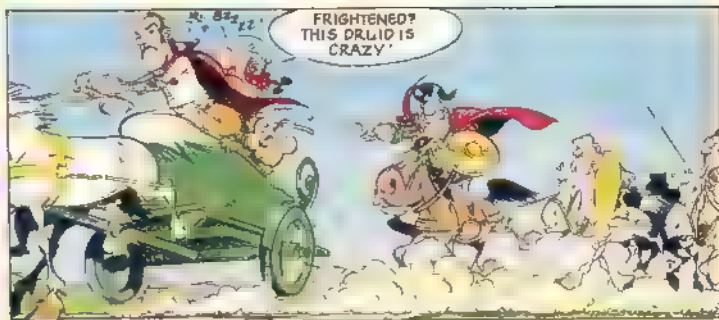




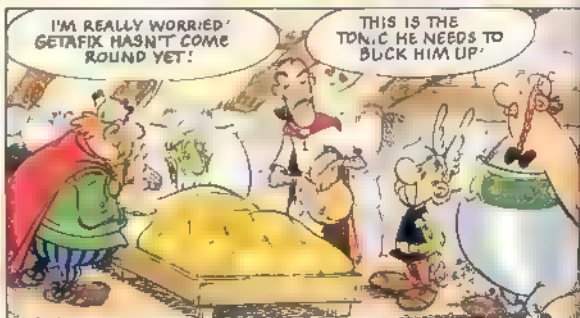
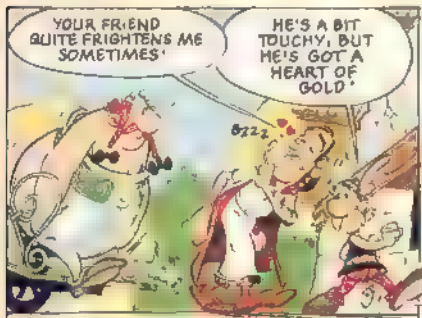
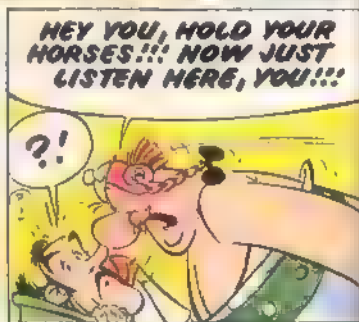
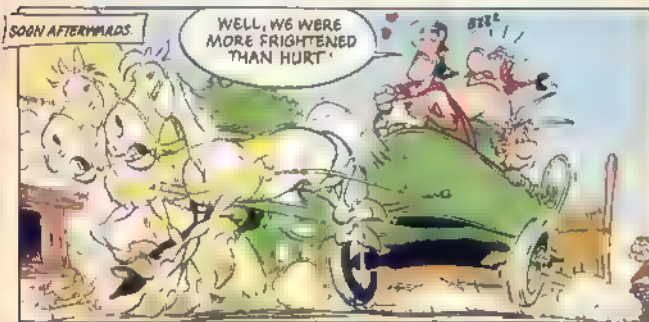
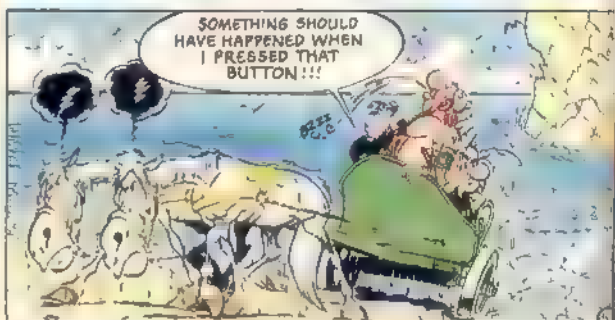
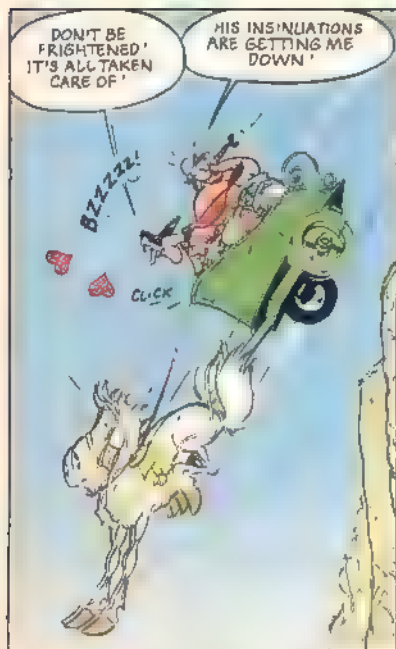




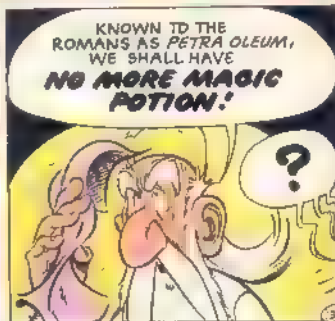
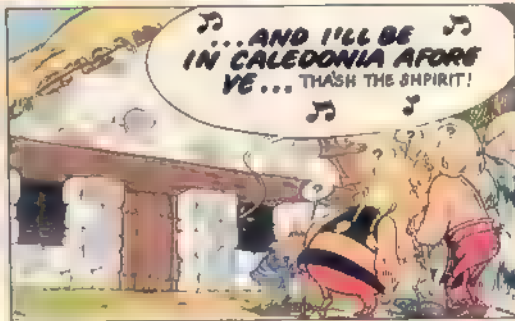
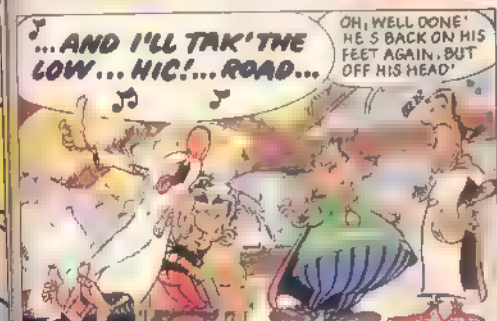
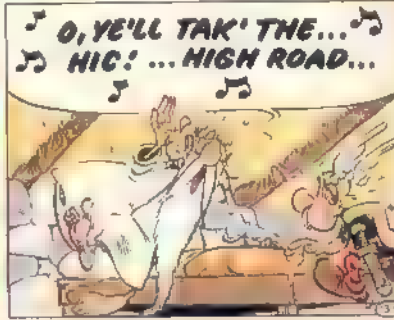
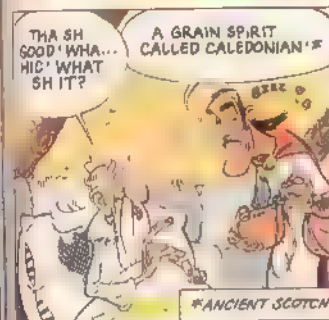
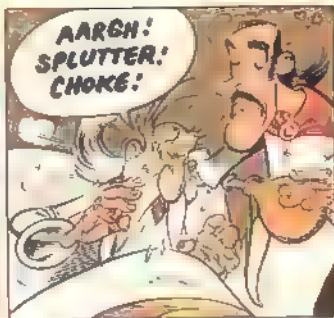




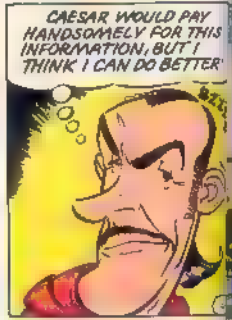
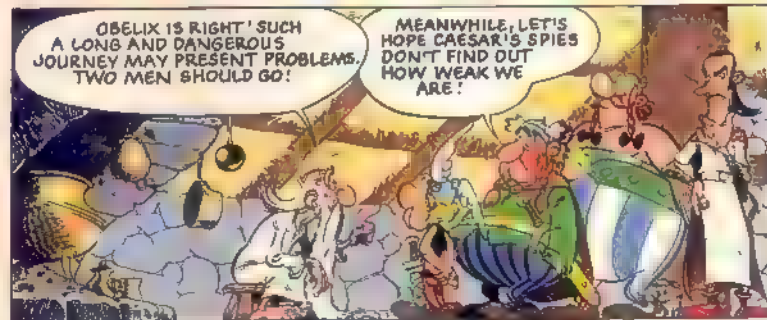
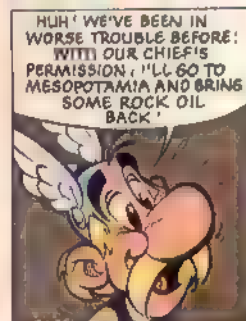
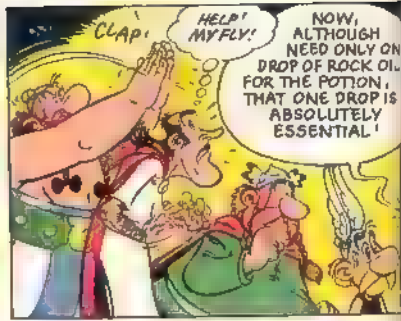




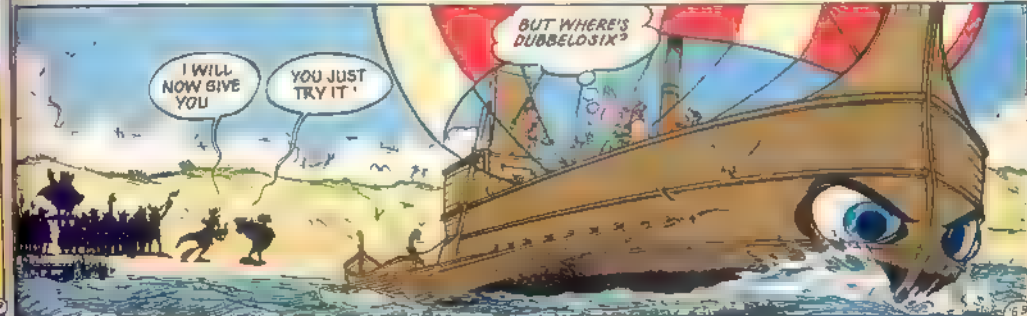
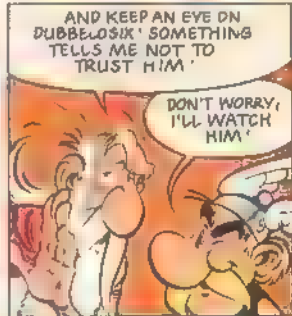
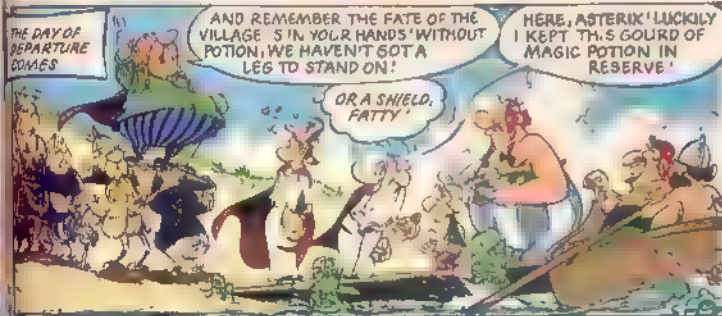
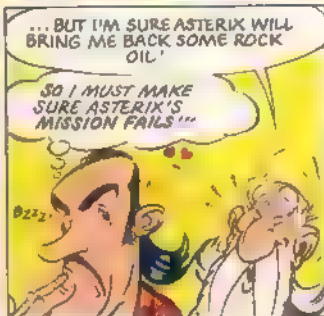
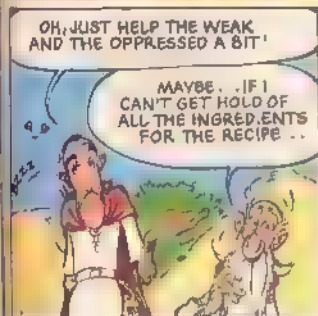




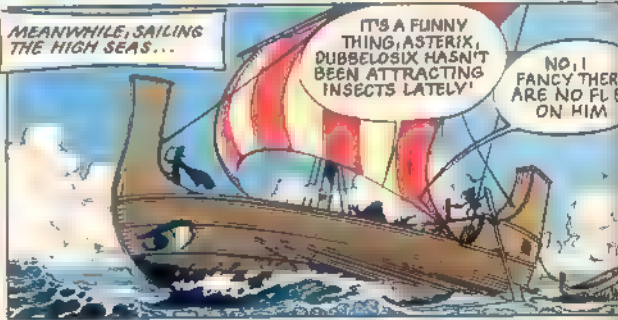
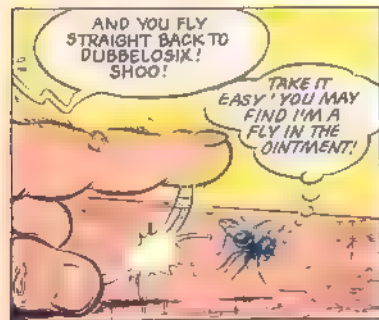
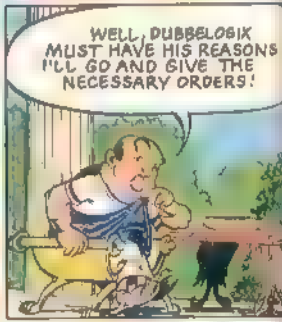
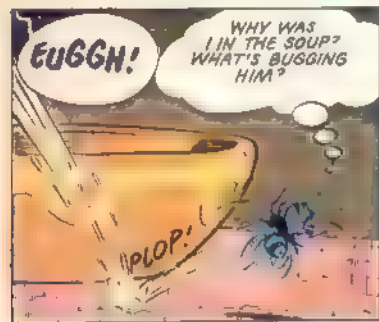
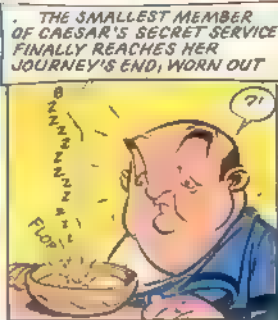
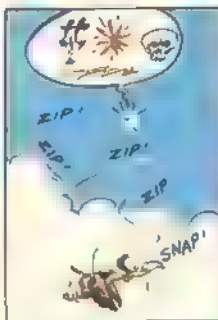
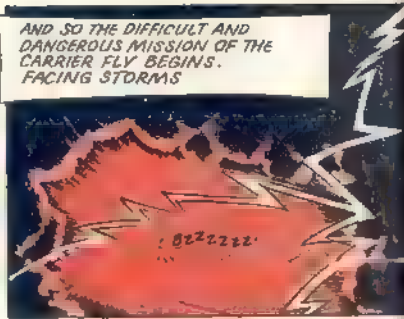
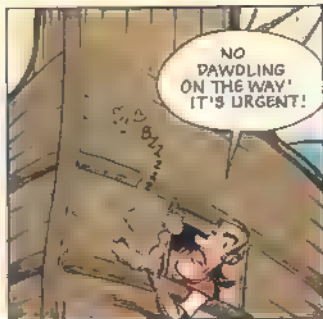


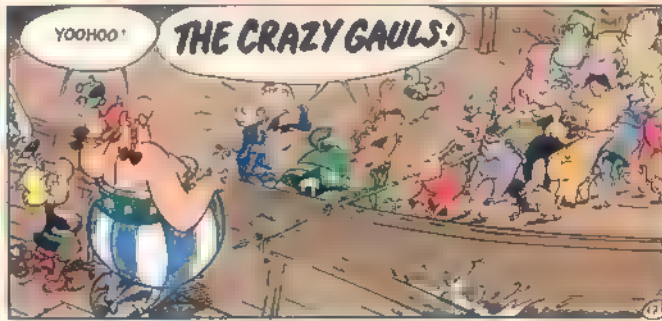
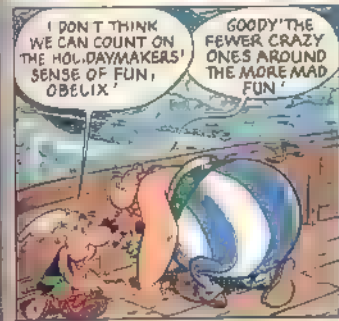
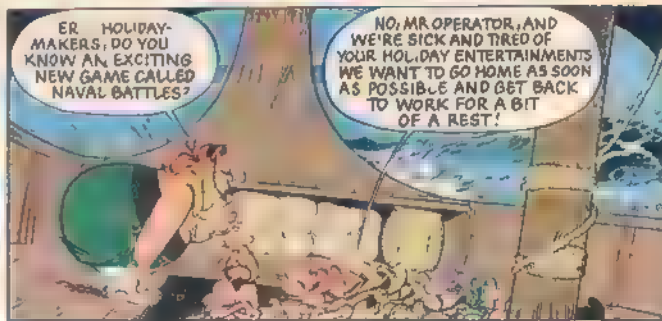
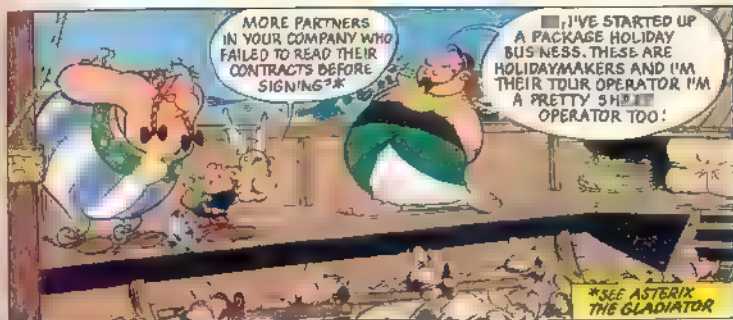




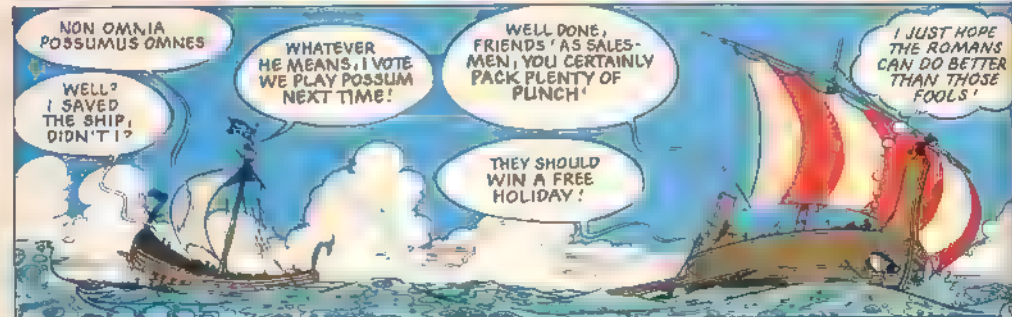
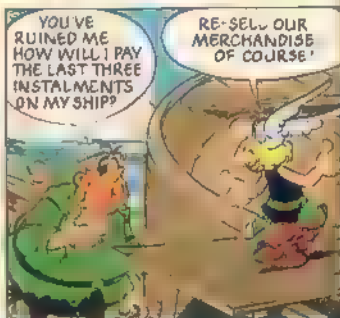
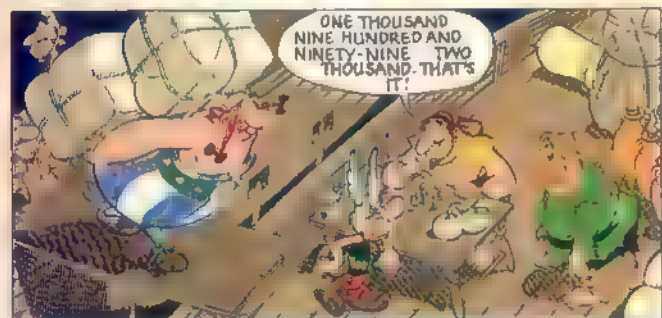
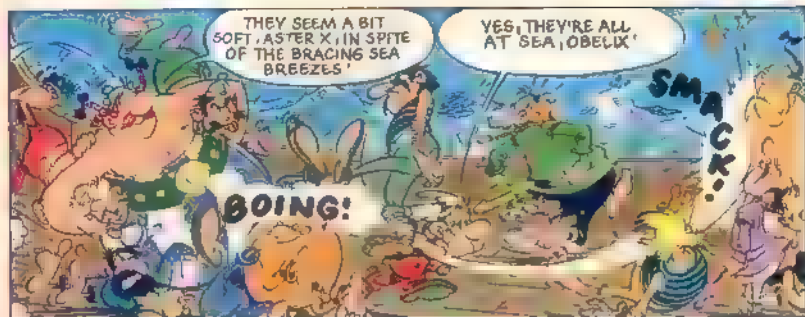












AND JUST THEN

SAIL  
AH-OY, MR  
OPERATOR!

A ROMAN GALLEY SAILS  
INTO THEIR KEN

PHOENICIAN  
SHIP AHEAD!

IT MUST  
BE THE ONE  
CARRYING THOSE  
INDOMITABLE GAULS  
WE HEARD  
ABOUT!

NOW FOR  
A GREAT DISPLAY  
OF NAVAL  
OPERATIONS,  
ROMAN FASHION!  
MY MAGNUM  
OPUS!\*

REMEMBER  
CAESAR WANTS  
THIS OP TO  
SUCCEED,  
CAPTAIN!

\*IN FACT, THE  
CAPTAIN'S OP No. 1

GOODY!  
ROMANS' NOW  
FOR SOME FUN  
AT LAST!

SOMETHING  
TELLS ME  
THEY'RE NOT  
HERE FOR  
FUN!

THE FLY HAS  
DELIVERED MY MESSAGE  
ALL RIGHT! WELL DONE  
THE SECRET  
SERVICE!

WE NOW HAVE A CHANCE TO OBSERVE THE  
SUPERBLY EFFICIENT BOARDING TACTICS  
PRACTISED BY THE ROMAN NAVY! FIRST,  
BALLISTAE THROW OUT GRAPPLING HOOKS...

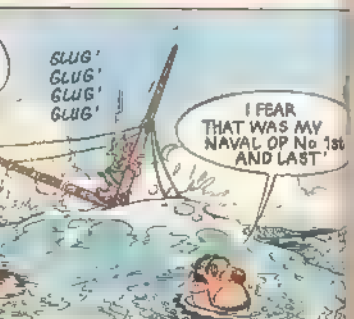
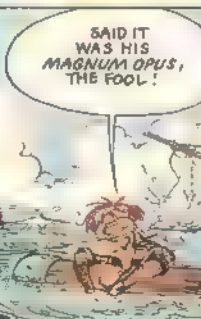
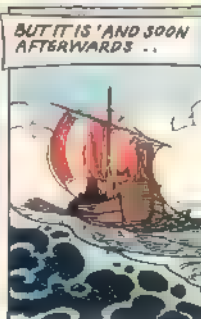
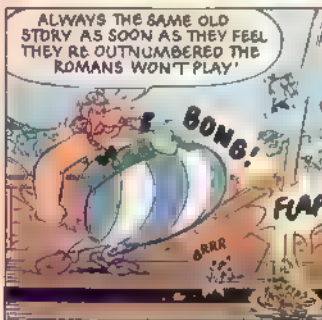
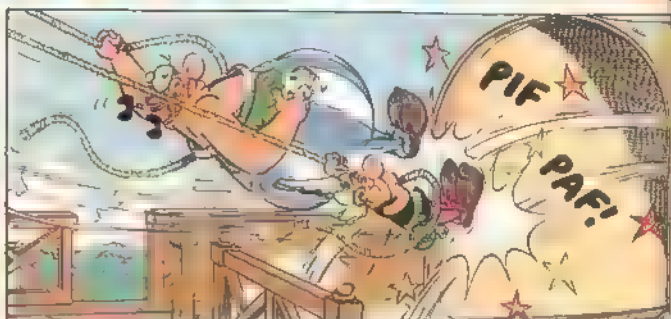
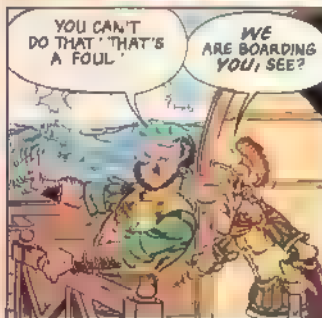
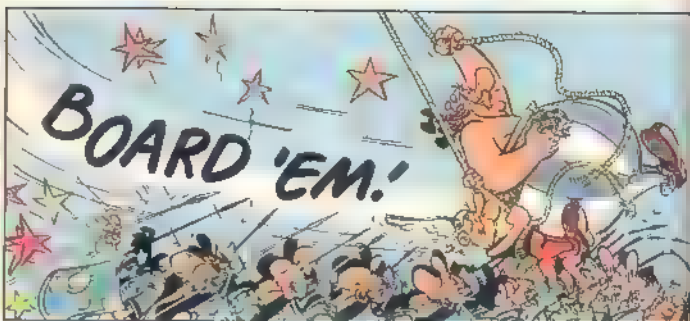
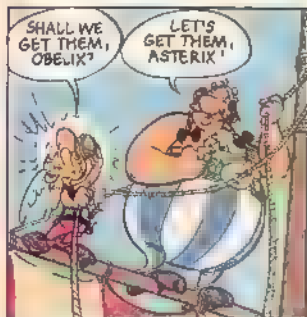
THEN THE ROMANS SIMPLY  
PULL, AND THE ENEMY'S FAT  
IS IN THE FIRE!

WHAT  
DO YOU MEAN,  
THE ENEMY'S  
FAT?

WHOOOSH!

GOING!





AND ONCE AGAIN...

ROMAN GALLEY  
AHOY, MR  
OPERATOR

THE NOW CLASSIC  
BOARDING TACTICS

BONG!

...ARE FOLLOWED  
BY AN EQUALLY  
TRADITIONAL  
FIGHT AND ITS  
AFTERMATH

WE'RE  
HAVING FUN,  
AREN'T WE,  
ASTERIX?

YES,  
BUT IT SEEMS  
ODD FOR THE ROMANS  
TO BE SO KEEN ON  
FIGHTING US,  
OBELIX!

EVERY TIME I  
SEE IT AGAIN I FIND  
SOMETHING ELSE TO  
APPRECIATE!

BUT IN ROME

BY JUPITER,  
THEY SHALL FEEL  
THE ANGER OF CAESAR!  
I'LL HAVE ALL THE  
MEDITERRANEAN  
PORTS  
BLOCKADED!

AND LOOK SHARP!  
I DON'T EXPECT MY NAVAL  
COMMANDERS TO STOP AND  
CONTEMPLATE ANY  
NAVELS' \*  
\*POPULAR MEDITERRANEAN  
FRUIT

I WANT TO MAKE  
SURE NOT EVEN A  
FLY COULD GET THROUGH  
THE NET!

HMM, AND  
THINKING OF  
FLIES

SURREPTITIUS!

ANY NEWS OF YOUR  
AGENT DUBBEL... DUBBEL  
SOMETHING?

I'M AFRAID  
WE HAVE A  
COMMUNICATIONS  
PROBLEM, O  
CAESAR!



PROBLEM? WHAT SORT OF PROBLEM?

OUR CARRIER FLY IS GOING SLOW. AND IF SHE ACTUALLY GOES ON STRIKE

PROBLEM? WHAT SORT OF PROBLEM?

OUR CARRIER FLY IS GOING SLOW. AND IF SHE ACTUALLY GOES ON STRIKE

WELL, IF IT'S WILDLIFE WE'RE DISCUSSING, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO FIND OUT IF THE LIONS IN THE CIRCUS ARE ON HUNGER STRIKE?!?!

BONK!

WELL, IF IT'S WILDLIFE WE'RE DISCUSSING, HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO FIND OUT IF THE LIONS IN THE CIRCUS ARE ON HUNGER STRIKE?!?!

BONK

EMERGING FROM ITS NAVAL CAMPAIGN, THE PHOENICIAN SHIP SAILS PEACEFULLY ON ITS WAY.

ASTERIX, I'M TIRED OF THIS VOYAGE, AND I GET HUNGRY WHEN I'M TIRED.

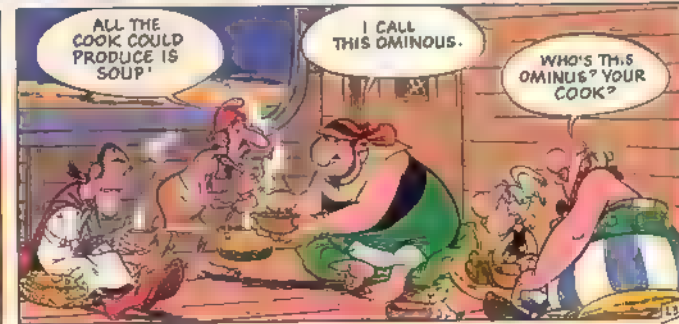
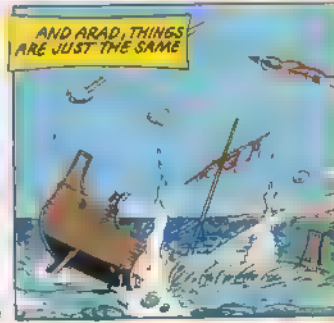
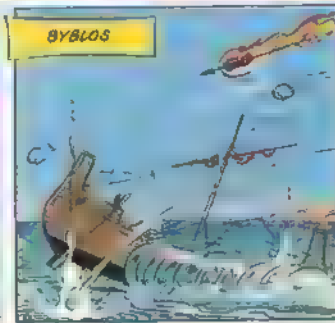
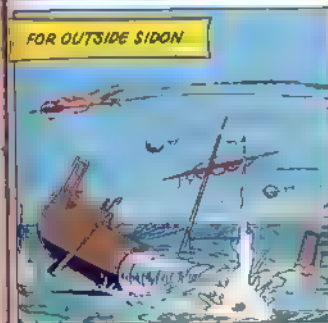
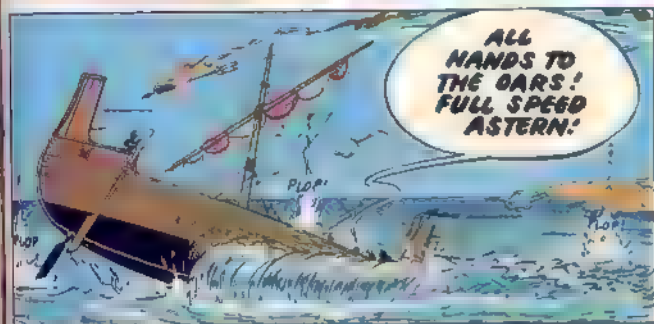
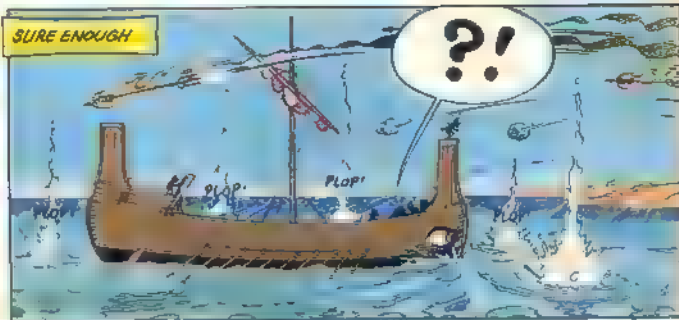
WAIT A BIT LONGER, OBELIX WE SHOULD SOON BE LANDING AT TYRE!

ASTERIX, I'M TIRED OF THIS VOYAGE, AND I GET HUNGRY WHEN I'M TIRED.

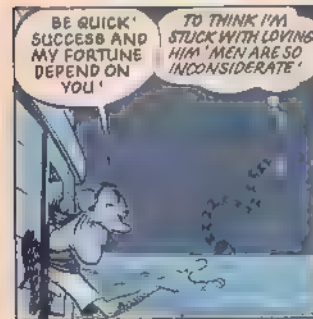
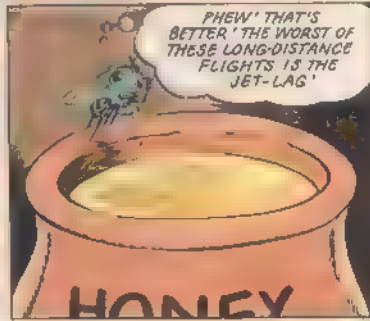
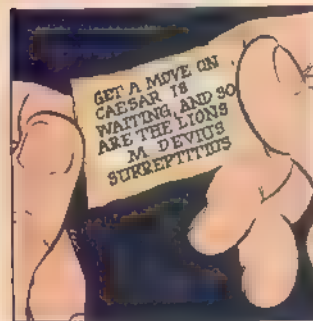
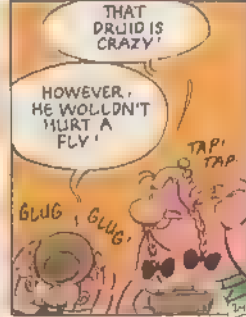
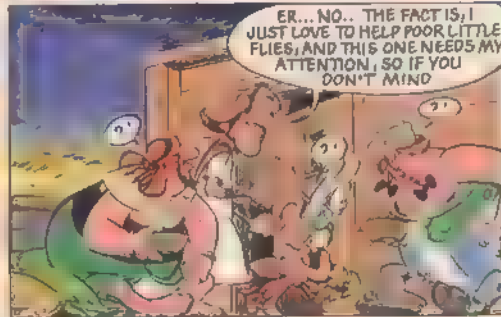
WAIT A BIT LONGER, OBELIX WE SHOULD SOON BE LANDING AT TYRE!

**DON'T TIRE NOW, HERE COMES TYRE!**

**BUT ONE OF THE FINEST OF PHOENICIAN TRADING PORTS HAS BECOME INACCESSIBLE THE HARBOUR MOUTH IS BLOCKED BY BIREMES, TRIREMES, QUADRIREMES AND QUINQUIREMES**







NEXT MORNING

THERE'S THE  
PROMISED LAND,  
ASTERIX!

GO TO JERUSALEM AND TELL SAMSON  
ALIUS I SENT YOU. HE'S MY SUPPLIER.  
YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET ROCK  
OIL FROM HIM.

THANKS, EKONOMI-  
KRISIS! SEE YOU SOON,  
MAYBE!

I HOPE SO!  
TRAVELLING  
WITH YOU IS AN  
ENRICHING  
EXPERIENCE!

AND I'M STILL  
HUNGRY! DO YOU  
THINK THERE ARE  
ANY WILD BOARDS  
HERE?

NEVER MIND  
THAT WE'VE GOT TO  
FIND OUR WAY!

THERE'S  
SOMEONE  
WHO MIGHT BE  
ABLE TO  
HELP US!

HULLO, FRIEND!  
CAN YOU TELL US  
THE WAY TO  
JERUSALEM?

MY DONKEY AND I  
ARE GOING THERE OUR-  
SELVES! LET'S JOIN  
FORCES!

MY NAME'S  
JOSHUA BEN  
ZEDRIN

I'M ASTERIX,  
DOBMATIX, AND  
DUBBELSIX THE DRUID!

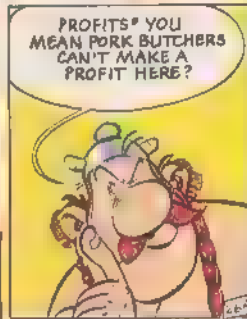
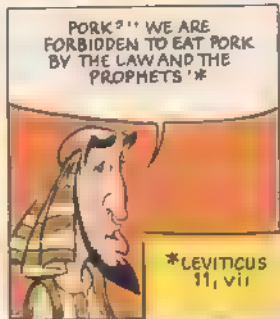
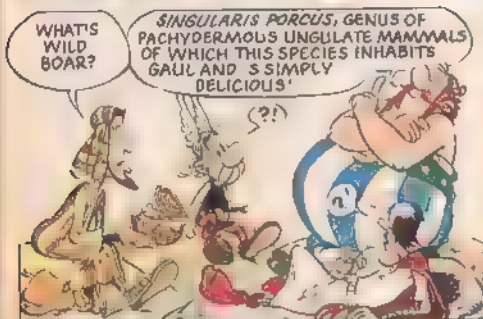
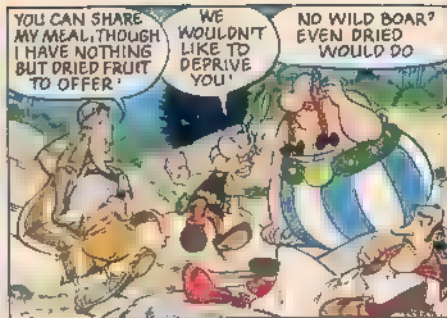
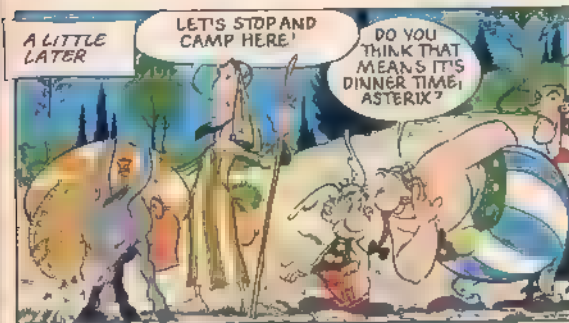
WE'VE COME  
FROM BAUL TO  
BUY ROCK OIL  
FROM THE  
MERCHANT  
SAMSON  
ALIUS

I WOULDN'T  
HAVE THOUGHT  
ANYONE WOULD  
COME SO FAR  
FOR THAT!

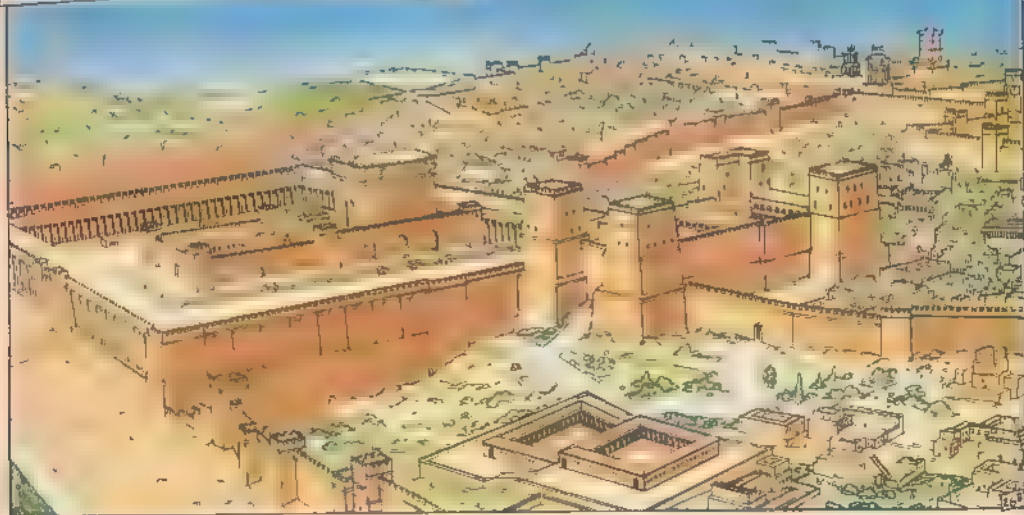
ARE  
THERE MANY  
ROMANS  
HERE?

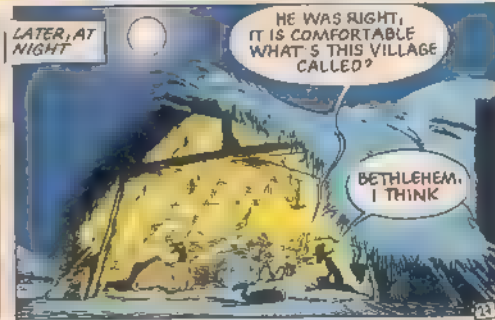
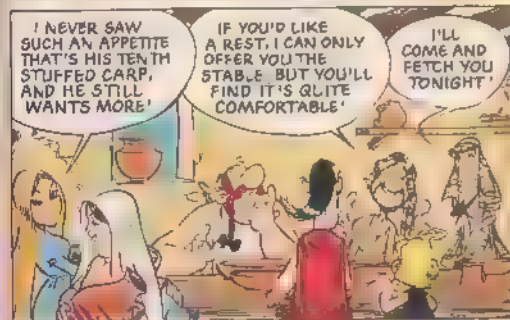
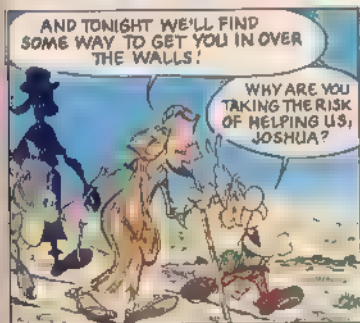
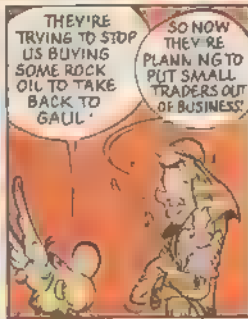
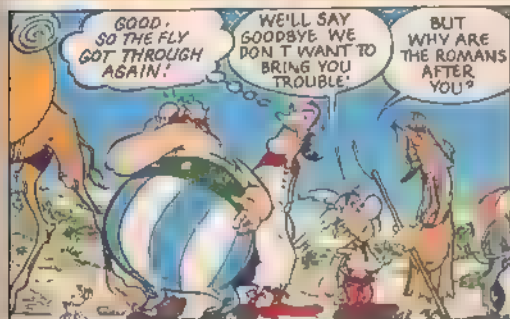
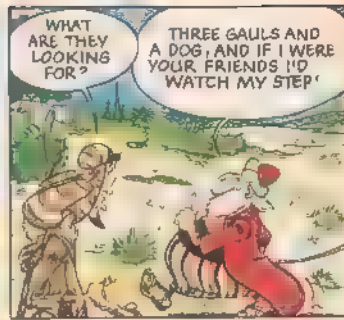
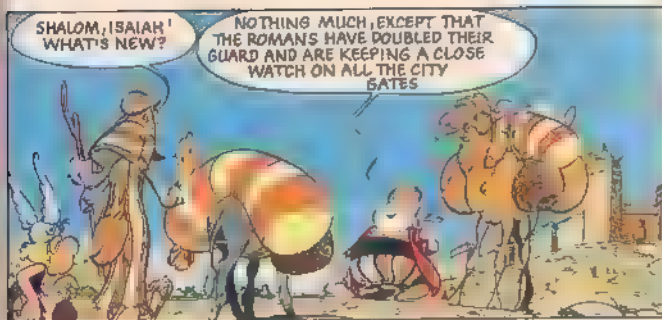
NOT AS MANY AS IN  
PHOENICIA. THAT'S A  
ROMAN PROVINCE WE'RE  
ONLY A PROTECTORATE,  
AND THE ROMANS DON'T  
HAVE A STRONG GARRISON  
IN JERUSALEM!



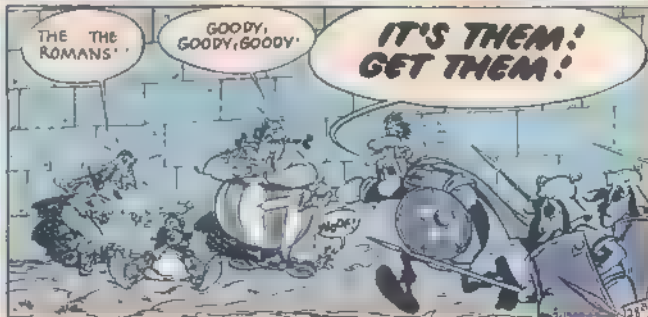
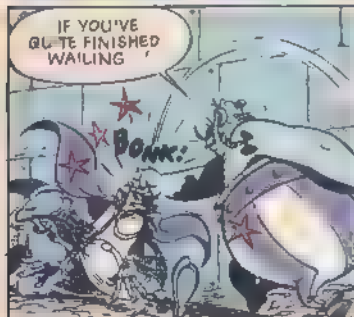
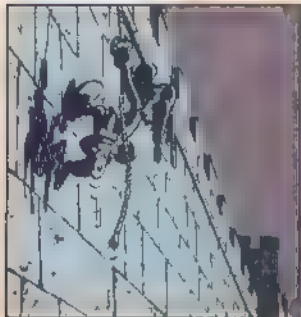
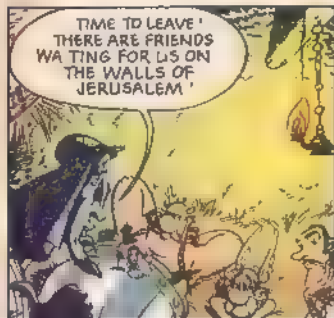


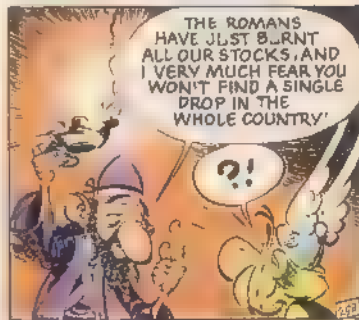
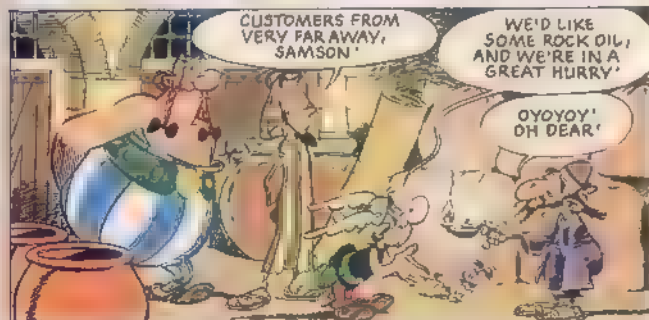
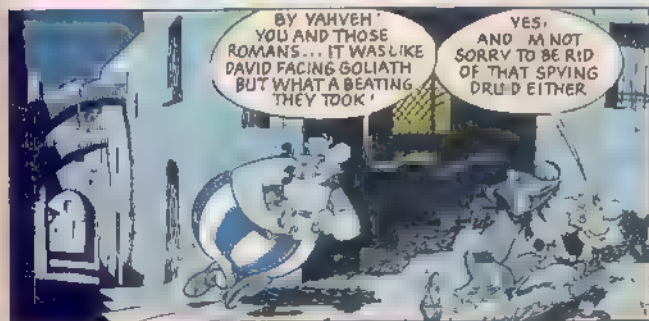
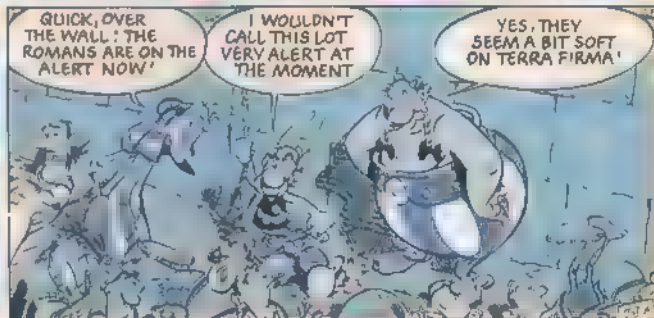
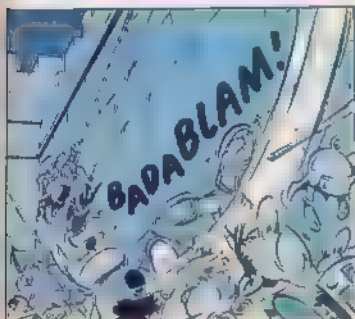
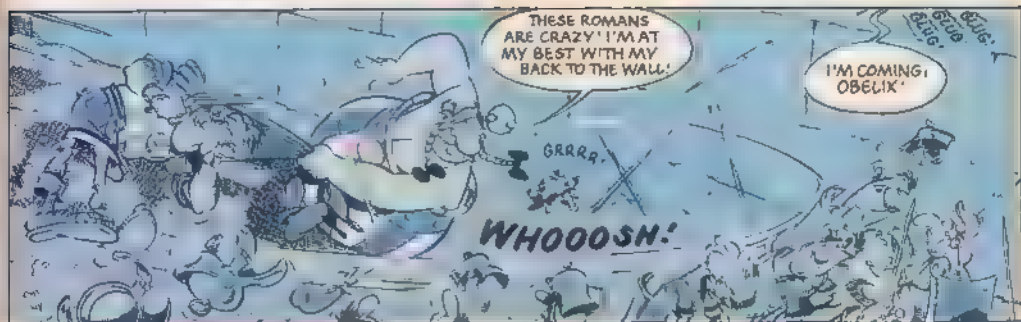
AT LAST, AFTER SEVERAL DAYS ON THE ROAD, OUR FRIENDS ARRIVE IN JERUSALEM, THE GREAT ROYAL CITY BEHIND ITS HIGH WALLS, LATER TO OPEN ITS BATES TO ALL THE FAITHS OF THE WORLD



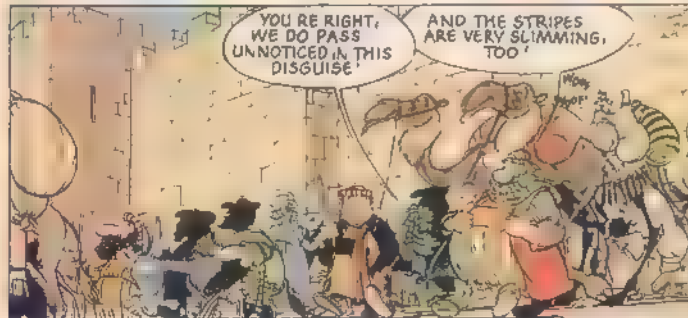
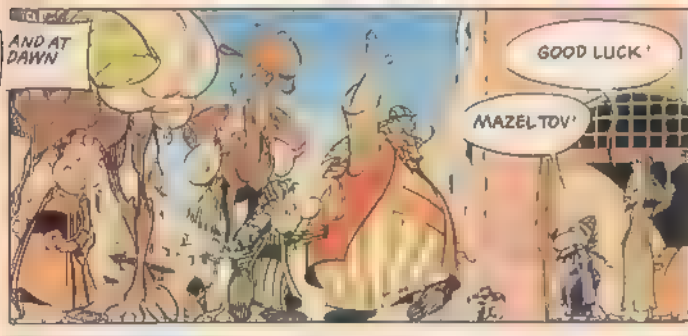
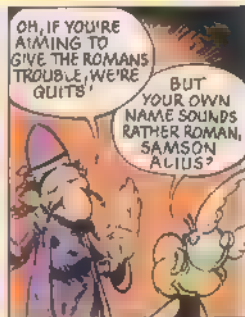
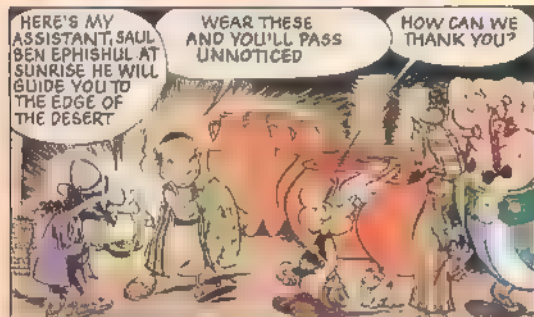
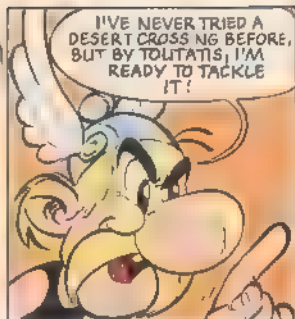
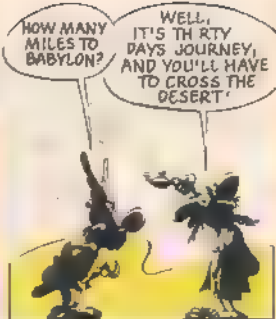
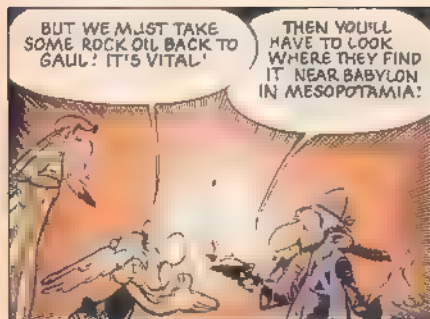












AT THE ROMAN  
PROCURATOR'S PALACE

AVE, O PONTIUS  
PIRATE: THE GAULS  
GOT AWAY, AND WE FEAR  
THEY'VE MADE GOOD  
THEIR ESCAPE NOW!

ONCE THEY'RE OUTSIDE MY  
TERRITORY, MY DEAR DUBBEL-  
OSIX, I COULDN'T CARE LESS  
WHAT THEY DO!

I WISH HE'D  
STOP WASHING  
HIS HANDS THE  
WHOLE TIME!

WELL, NEVER MIND! ASTERIX  
AND OBELIX ARE BOUND TO  
GO BACK ON BOARD SHIP, AND  
WHEN THEY DO WE'LL BE  
WAITING, WITH QUITE A  
RECEPTION COMMITTEE!

MEANWHILE

WE'RE COMING TO  
THE DEAD SEA!

IT MAKES  
ME SICK,  
ASTERIX!

I HAVE  
TO ADMIT  
THESE MOUNTS  
ARE RATHER  
BUMPY!

I DIDN'T MEAN THAT! IT  
MAKES ME SICK TO THINK  
OF THE RACIA-DISCRIMI-  
NATION PRACTISED AGA NST  
BOARS IN THIS COUNTRY

?!?

THE SEA!  
YIPPEE!!!

IT'S SO HOT,  
I COULD DO WITH  
A NICE DIP!

HEY,  
WAIT!

HERE  
GOES

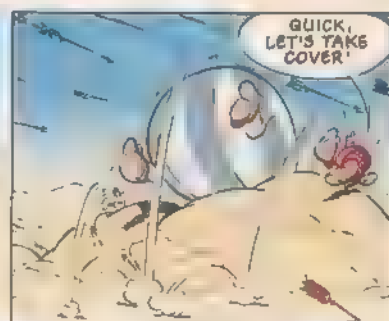
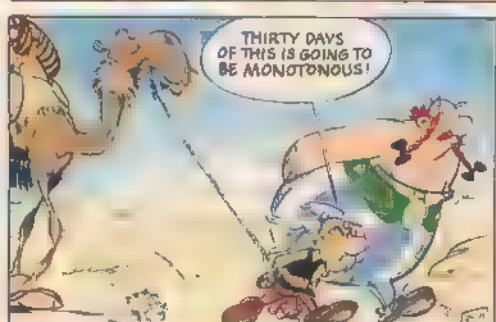
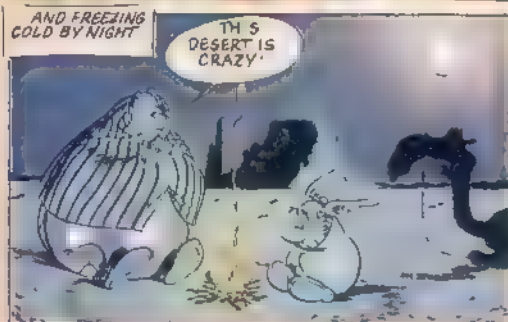
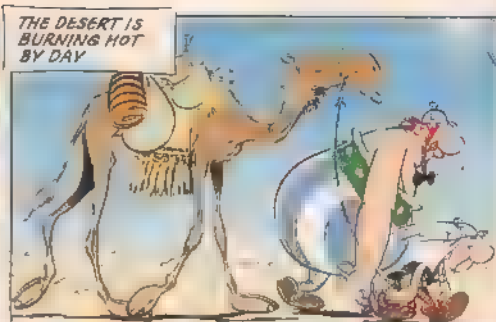
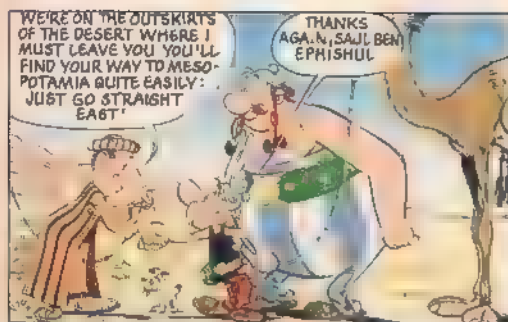
FLOP!  
SPL/FLOP!  
FLOP!  
FLOP!

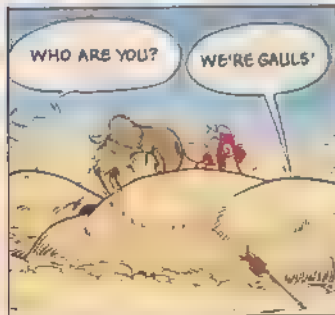
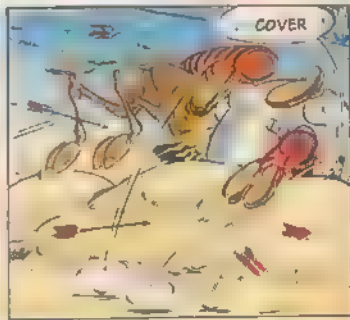
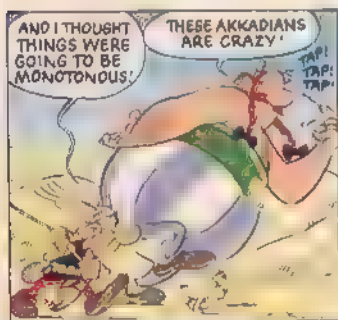
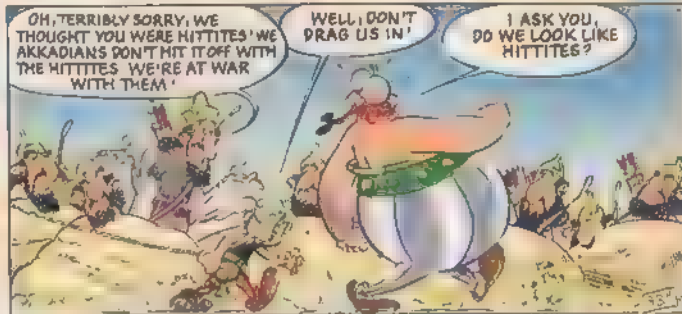
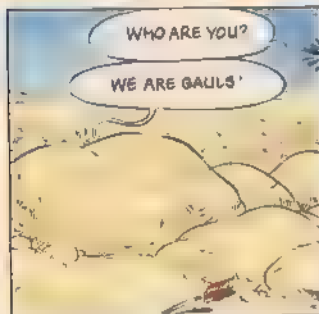
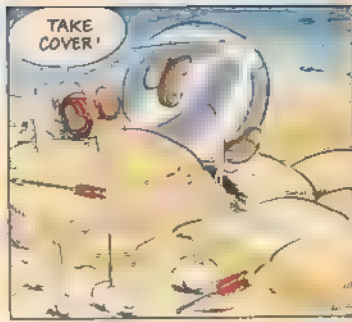
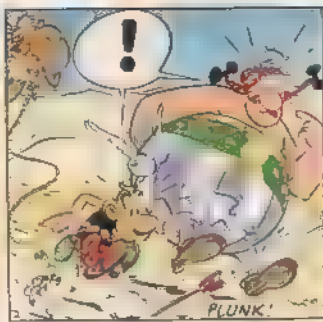
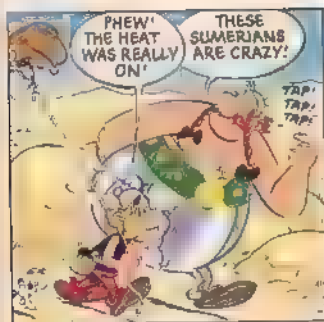
I WAS GOING TO WARN YOU! THE DEAD  
SEA HAS A SALT CONTENT SIX TIMES  
HIGHER THAN THAT OF OTHER SEAS, AND  
ITS DENSITY IS SUCH THAT THE HUMAN  
BODY JUST FLOATS ON TOP!

HOHOHO!  
HANA!

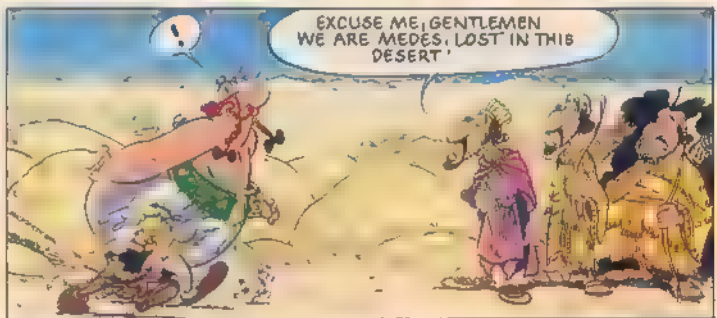
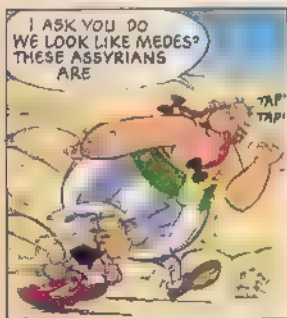
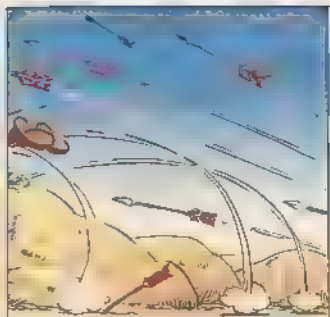
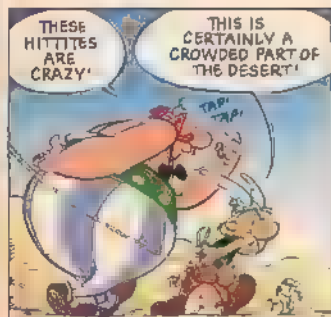
ARF!  
ARF!  
ARF!

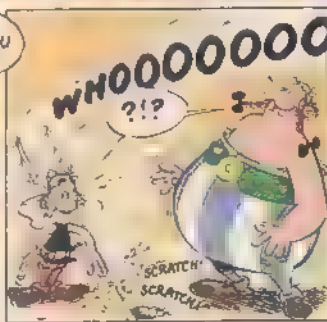
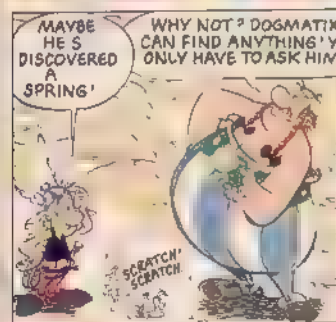
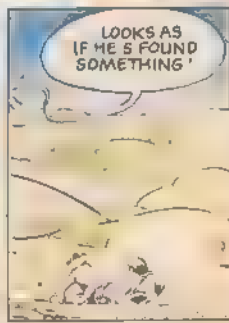
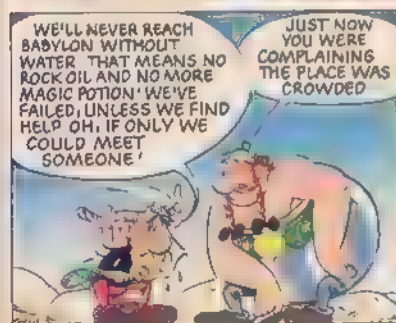
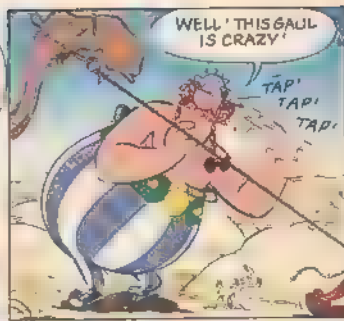
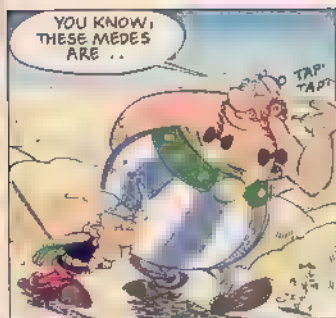




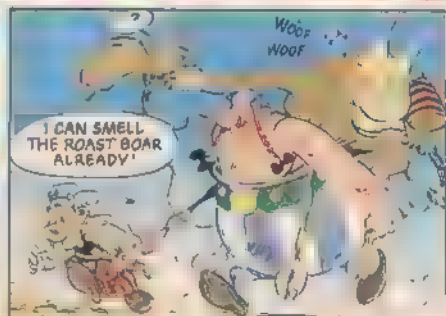
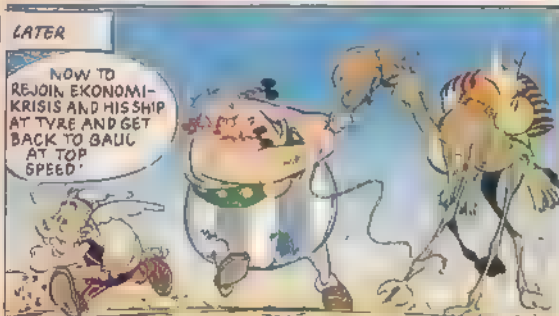
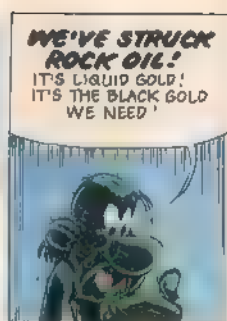












AFTER A TIRING JOURNEY WITH THE SHIP OF THE DESERT

ALL RIGHT OBELIX?

ME? YES WHY?

YUK! I FEEL SEA-SICK!

...OUR FRIENDS RETURN TO TYRE.

LET'S USE SAMSON ALIUS'S DISGUISES AGAIN, TO HELP US GET INTO THE PORT UNNOTICED!

BEING HUMPHED ABOUT REALLY GIVES ME THE HUMPH!

THE PLACE IS FULL OF ROMANS WE MUST BE CAREFUL!

HOW SHALL WE EVER FIND EKONOMIKRISIS IN ALL THIS?

I'VE GOT AN IDEA!

'SCUSE ME, SOLDIER

MPH?

WHERE CAN WE FIND EKONOMIKRISIS, PLEASE?

THE PHOENICIAN MERCHANT? HIS WAREHOUSE IS AT THE END OF THE PORT JUST GO STRAIGHT AHEAD YOU CAN'T MISS IT AND NOW WOULD YOU KINDLY PUT ME DOWN?

BLING!

YOU SEE? GOOD MANNERS WILL GET YOU ANYWHERE

OH, WHAT A BRILLIANTLY STRIKING IDEA! YOU'LL BRING THE WHOLE ROMAN GARRISON OF TYRE DOWN ON US!

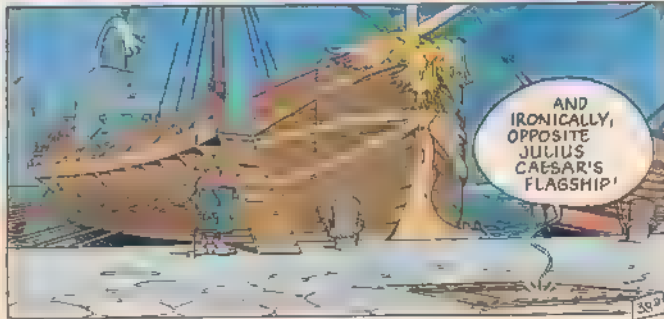
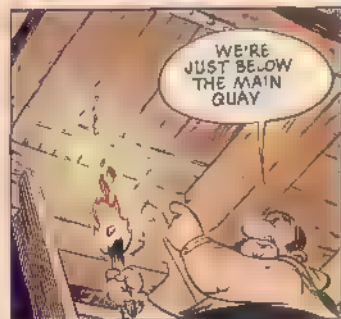
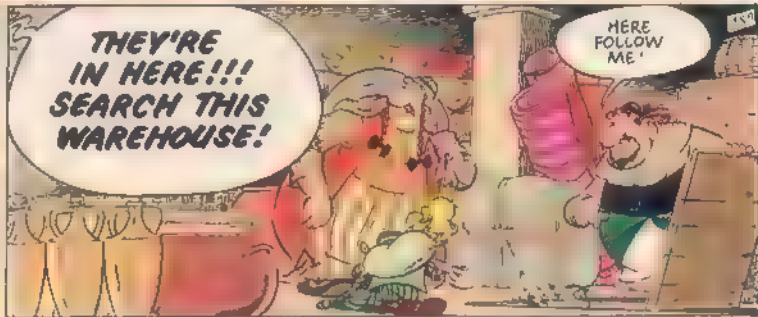
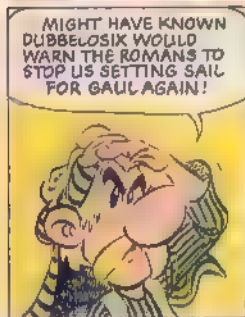
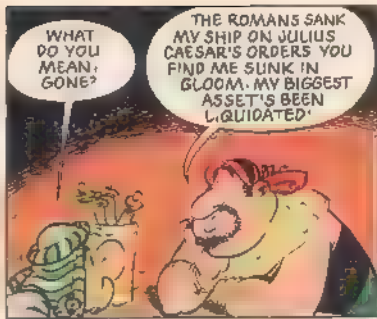
EKONOMIKRISIS IMPORT-EXPORT

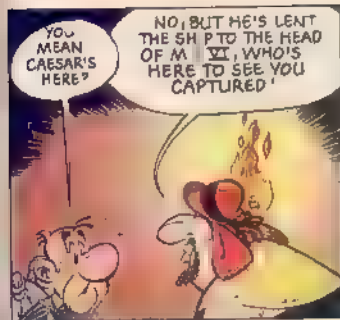
OF COURSE, WHEN IT'S NOT MISTER ASTERIX'S IDEA

HERE WE ARE!

THERE THEY ARE. AFTER THEM!



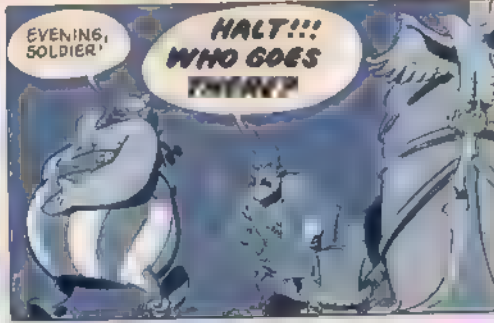
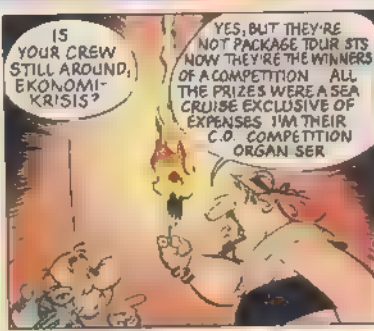
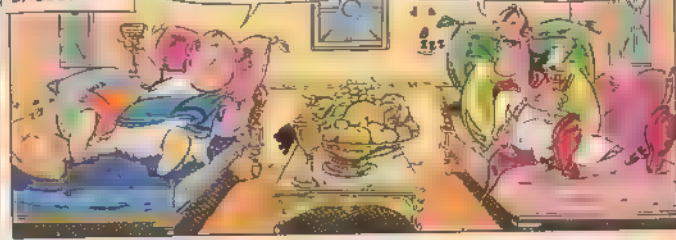




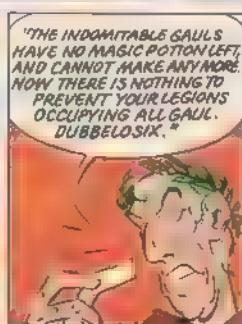
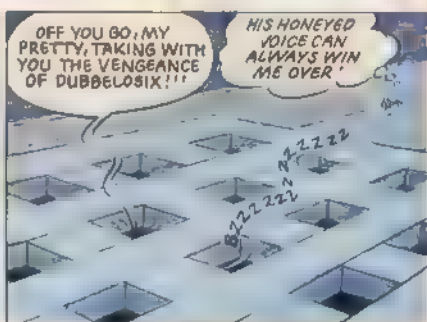
SURE ENOUGH,  
ON BOARD  
CAESAR'S  
GALLEY

CAESAR IS GETTING  
IMPATIENT DUBBELSIX  
WHAT ABOUT THAT  
MAGIC POTION?

I ONLY HAVE TO DISPOSE OF ASTERIX  
AND OBELIX, WHICH SHOULDN'T TAKE  
LONG THEY'VE JUST BEEN SPOTTED  
IN HEBREW DISGUISE





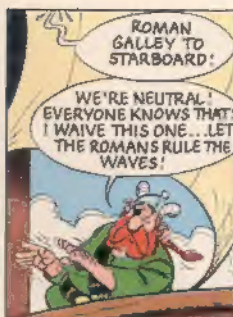


THE RETURN JOURNEY IS  
A PLEASANT IF ROUTINE  
KIND OF CRUISE...



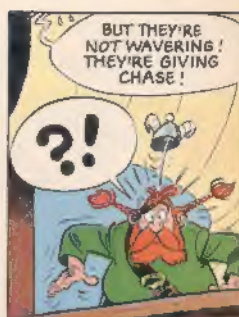
PIRATE  
SHIP AHOY,  
C.O.!

CUSTOMERS:



ROMAN  
GALLEY TO  
STARBOARD!

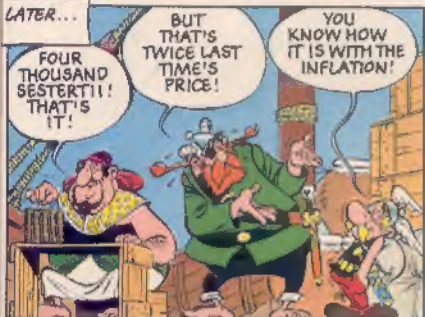
WE'RE NEUTRAL!  
EVERYONE KNOWS THAT!  
I WAIVE THIS ONE... LET  
THE ROMANS RULE THE  
WAVES!



BUT THEY'RE  
NOT WAVERING!  
THEY'RE GIVING  
CHASE!

?!

LATER...



FOUR  
THOUSAND  
SESTERTII!  
THAT'S  
IT!

BUT  
THAT'S  
TWICE LAST  
TIME'S  
PRICE!

YOU  
KNOW HOW  
IT IS WITH  
THE INFLATION!



HOW  
WOULD YOU LIKE TO  
GO INTO BUSINESS  
WITH ME!

AVE  
ATQUE  
VALE!

NEVER MIND THE  
VEILED REFERENCES;  
HOW AM I GOING TO  
SELL THIS LOT?

FLOAT A  
COMPANY!



WELL, WE ARE  
BRINGING ROCK OIL  
BACK TO GAUL IN  
SPITE OF YOU,  
DUBBELOSIX!

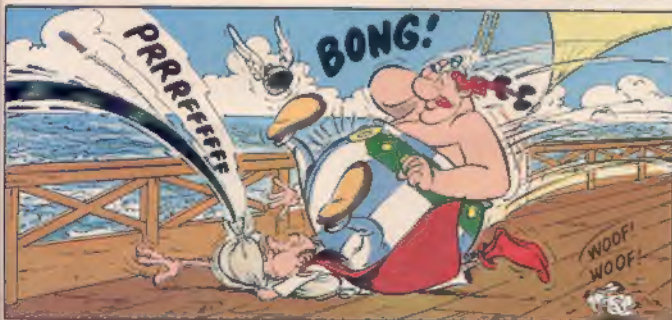


?!

I'M NOT  
SO SURE ABOUT  
THAT!



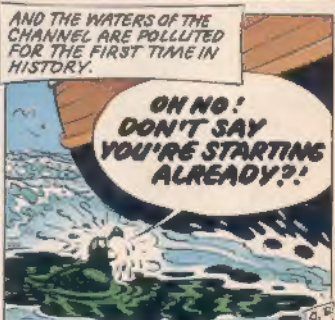
NO, OBELIX!  
NOOOO!



PRRRRRRR

BONG!

WOOF!  
WOOF!



AND THE WATERS OF THE  
CHANNEL ARE POLLUTED  
FOR THE FIRST TIME IN  
HISTORY.

OH NO!  
DON'T SAY  
YOU'RE STARTING  
ALREADY?!







